

PLANNING AHEAD

Notes for the Planning and Policy Community

Volume 5, Issue 3

April 2002

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Vacancy Announcements

Scott Clark – CESPD

The South Pacific Division (SPD) is recruiting for two technical GS-14 positions in the Planning and Policy Division. One position will focus primarily on plan formulation, and the second on economics and formulation. Strong water resources and team skills are desirable, as is a background in planning, water resources, plan formulation, environmental analysis, and/or economic evaluations in a wide geographical area with varied social, environmental, and political interests.

SPD, which was established in 1888, covers all or parts of 10 southwestern states. The Division's planning program has averaged about \$30 million per year over the last several years for well over one hundred different studies of multipurpose, ecosystem restoration, flood damage reduction, navigation, and other water resource needs. The program has a tradition of being active (seven projects authorized in the Water Resources Development Act of 2000) and creative in its approaches to problem solving. The Planning and Policy Division is a ten-person team working with and assisting about 200 planners and scientists in the Albuquerque, Los Angeles, Sacramento and San Francisco District offices. South Pacific Division information is at <http://www.spd.usace.army.mil/>, and Planning and Policy Division is at <http://www.spd.usace.army.mil/cwpm/public/plan/index.htm>.

The SPD office is at 333 Market Street in the heart of downtown San Francisco. The office is easily accessible by public transportation, and is within a short walk of many excellent restaurants and shops. The San Francisco Bay area and northern California offer a wide variety of cultural, recreational, and educational opportunities. The climate in the bay area is very moderate with wet winters and dry summers. More information on the area is at http://money.cnn.com/best/bplive/details/SANFR_CA.html, <http://www.sfvisitor.org/> and http://www.sfchamber.com/living_working_menu.htm.

Because of the higher cost of living, especially housing, the position salary includes a 19% locality payment. The housing costs, which range typically from \$250,000 and up, decline as the commuting distance increases; however, there is excellent public transportation including the light rail (BART), city and commuter buses, high-speed ferries, and van and car pools.

A selection list will be requested from the West Civilian Personnel Operations Center (WCPOC) o/a 31 May 2002. To be considered for this position, you must have a one to three-page resume and supplemental data sheet RESUMIX application on file with the West Region CPOC. Information on preparing these documents is on the World Wide Web at <http://cpolrhp.belvoir.army.mil/west/>. Click on "Employment Information", then "RESUMIX Kit." A sample RESUMIX resume is contained in the kit, as well as the supplemental data questionnaire. The West CPOC requires 10 working days to process resumes, so please plan to submit your resume NLT 17 May 2002. Resumes and supplemental data sheets may be e-mailed to: resumix@cpocwcp.hua.army.mil or mailed to Department of the Army, West Regional Civilian Personnel Operations Center, Building 61801, PO Box 12926, Fort Huachuca, AZ 85670-2926.

Please call Mr. Scott Clark at 415-977-8171 or Mr. Robin Mooney at 415-977-8167 if you have any questions or need additional information.

New HQ Staffer

Dr. Mark Colosimo joined Planning and Policy Division staff in August 2002. Mark filled the environmental planner position in the Guidance Development Branch formerly held by Cheryl Smith. Mark has a BS in Biology from Penn State University, a MA in Geography and Environmental Planning from Towson University, and a MS in Environmental Science and Policy from Johns Hopkins University. In addition, he recently completed his Ph.D. in Environmental Engineering from Johns Hopkins University. Mark's dissertation evaluated physical, biological, and chemical stream changes in a watershed as it urbanized. Mark worked for the Baltimore District for 12 years (4 years in Planning Division and 8 years in the Regulatory Program) prior to coming to HQ. Most recently, he was the environmental policy advisor for Planning Division, Baltimore District. Mark is also a certified professional wetland scientist.

Update on Status of OMB Approval for Public Surveys


Stuart Davis, CEIWR-MD

The Corps has requested and received an emergency extension of our current OMB survey approval, which was to expire on 31 March 2002. Under this emergency extension, we may continue to conduct public surveys using the set of currently approved questionnaires located on IWR's website, <http://www.iwr.usace.army.mil/iwr/omb/OMBHOMEA.HTM>. Existing requirements to obtain a 10-day turnaround approval for each survey, prior to conduct, remain in effect.

A date of 30 June 2002 should be placed on questionnaires for surveys conducted during this extension period. This extension authority applies only to the currently approved set of questionnaires.

New questionnaires, which were included in our request for the upcoming 3-year period, have not been approved yet and may not be used until approval is received.

We expect to receive approval of the new, expanded set of questionnaires by 30 June 2002. At that time, we will provide relevant information about the approved questionnaires and the process for using them.

For more information contact Stuart Davis, CEIWR-MD at 703/428-7086, Stuart.A.Davis@usace.army.mil 

HQ Developmental Assignment Is "Incredible Opportunity"

But Reports Should Not "Punish Reviewers"

Susan Hazlett -- CECW-PC

Every year, as funding permits, HQUSACE offers the opportunity for developmental assignments in one or more of its Civil Works Divisions. The assignment duration can run between 120 days and 1 year, with most falling in the 4- to 6-month range. HQUSACE pays per diem and the sending District or Division pays salary for the selected candidates. The assignments are billed as an opportunity for "broad training and valuable experience". A memorandum from HQUSACE came out in November 2001 advertising that Planning and Policy Division was considering candidates for such a developmental assignment. Past history has led me to the conclusion that things which yield broad training and valuable experience generally involve pain of one type or another, but I applied anyway, having promised a couple of mentors that I would.


I received word in January that my application had been accepted, and I started trying to tie up loose ends in my job back home where I am Chief of Planning Branch in Planning, Environmental, and Regulatory Division in the Tulsa District. Preparing to leave for a week or two of vacation or training is challenging; preparing to leave for 6 months is like trying to climb a mountain that's going through a growth spurt. I left Tulsa with an in-box that was empty only because my secretary took pity on me, and I arrived bright and early Monday morning (March 11) on the doorstep of the GAO building. I will be here a total of 6 months; the first three will be spent working for Doug Lamont, Chief of Policy Compliance Support Branch, and the last three will be spent working for Zoltan Montvai, Chief of Planning Management Branch.

Harry Kitch, Chief of Guidance Development Branch and the publisher of Planning Ahead, asked that I provide a write-up of what I've learned so far (6 weeks into my 6 months). No doubt, he thought it would be profound and pithy. Below is a brief list of what I've learned, at least to date. I am hopeful that I'll learn more, and, if I do, I'll write a follow-up. If you don't hear from me again, you'll know that this was all I learned, or that Harry gave up on me.

1. It's darned expensive to live here.
2. If you're in a car pool you drop everything (maybe even a General) and go when the carpool goes, because it is going on time.
3. Offices and cubicles are set up on a grid system and you can easily find where people sit if you know which row and column they sit in. Or so I'm told. It is only slightly less confusing than the Washington D.C. street system.
4. The workload is huge and unyielding. For the first couple of reports I reviewed I smugly provided my comments before they were due. Then people found my cubicle. Now I wince when I see people with reports in their hands, whether they're for me or not. As of today I have reviews due for 7 reports or read-ahead packages; they are all due within the next 10 days. One of the "reports" includes a main report and 7 Appendices in 5 three-ring and 3 comb binders. And they're going easy on me. At least I think they are...
4. There's a fine line between technical review and policy compliance review. Most of the comments I so smugly provided (see 4, above) turned out to be technical comments and unusable by the extremely gracious review manager who explained that to me. Many of us in the field have been griping about the HQ penchant for tech review when they're supposed to be doing policy review. Well I'm here to tell you, it's hard to differentiate sometimes.
5. The folks who work here want desperately to finish their work on time and get an answer back to the field and work very hard to be sure that gets done. The problem is that in the midst of a review, someone somewhere (Congressman, sponsor, District, MSC) lights their hair on fire and people get yanked in to help douse the flames. And the review that was due out today, slips until tomorrow or next week or the week after.

So, if I went back to my District today, would I do anything different based on what I've learned? Yes, first of all I would never punish the reviewers by sending them a main report and 7 appendices in 5 three-ring and 3 comb binders. Second, I would not be afraid to call HQUSACE and ask for early feedback to resolve a potential issue. The earlier the issue gets resolved, the less likely it is that someone will light their hair on fire down the road. Resolving issues early takes a lot less time than trying to resolve them later in the process and is a lot less painful for everyone.

And, if I had it to do all over again would I come back? Well, so far, I'd have to say absolutely yes. This is an incredible opportunity to work alongside the people who write our regulations, who review our reports, who have the experience and knowledge to plan circles around me. I ride the Metro in to work and every day I see the Lincoln, Jefferson, and Washington Memorials and am grateful for the opportunity. And some days I can even find my cubicle!

[Point of comparison: the D.C. street system resembles nothing so much as an enormous Tinker Toy squashed to two dimensions and then superimposed on a grid -- *The Editor*] 


Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP)

Bruce Eisenstein and Michele Bistany – CENAB-PL

The Baltimore District is embarking on a comprehensive innovative Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP) for the Port of Baltimore Harbor and the Chesapeake Bay approach channels. The plan's area extends from the mouth of the Bay in Virginia to Chesapeake and Delaware Canal, in the upper Bay, Maryland/Delaware. The DMMP continues the Corps tradition of environmental and economic stewardship of the Chesapeake Bay. The study involves extensive cooperation and coordination with numerous interested parties including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Marine Fisheries Service, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, the Maryland Port Administration, and several State of Maryland resource agencies to develop a long-term strategy for dredged material placement within the Port of Baltimore and approach channels.

The Baltimore District is responsible for the maintenance of the Baltimore Harbor and Chesapeake Bay approach channels, which typically requires the annual placement of approximately 4.5 million cubic yards of dredged material. The purpose of the DMMP is to identify how the dredged material will be managed in an economically and environmentally acceptable manner, and give priority to the beneficial placement of the material. With all the agencies involved, various beneficial options have been suggested, including placement to restore several Chesapeake Bay islands, to stabilize eroding shorelines, to improve wetlands through thin layer applications, to improve agricultural fertility, to cap landfills with impermeable material, and to assist in reclaiming old abandoned mines. The highly dynamic team will thoroughly evaluate all options and reach a recommended consensus for material placement.

The DMMP includes a tiered environmental impact statement (EIS). The Baltimore District recognizes the importance of the EIS as actively invoking good public and agency participation into the plan, reducing public and agency mistrust, establishing a good plan formulation foundation for future disposal option studies and documents, and establishing solid environmental documentation for plan recommendation.

The DMMP process began with a Preliminary Assessment that was completed in September 2001. The DMMP and tiered EIS for the Port of Baltimore are scheduled for public distribution in late 2004. For further information on this study, please contact Ms. Michele Bistany, the study manager at michele.a.bistany@usace.army.mil 

Masters Degree Program Taking Shape

Mark Dunning – CEIWR-PA

As part of the planning "Hire-Train-Retain" initiative the Corps is working with the Universities Council on Water Resources (UCOWR) to develop a masters degree program in water resources planning and management. UCOWR is a consortium of 90 universities that offer water resources education. The degree program will enable planners and other technical professionals to complete requirements for a masters degree at government expense in a relatively compressed time frame. The program fills an important niche in our need to rapidly build capability in the face of losses of experienced personnel by

providing a significant incentive for hiring and retaining planning talent as well as enhancing that talent through the opportunity for professional growth offered by an advanced professional education.


Under the program students will attend a degree-granting university for one semester and take a series of required courses while in residence. They will then complete the remainder of courses using locally-available courses and distance learning courses that meet program requirements. Thus far three universities have expressed interest in serving as degree-granting universities: Johns Hopkins, Southern Illinois, and Washington State, with the prospect of more universities being added in the future.

Content requirements for the masters program were developed by a UCOWR advisory panel and a team of Corps planners consisting of Larry Donovan, Mark Dunning, and Russ Rangos. Details about administering and funding the masters degree program are still being worked out; however, the goal is to have the program ready so that planners can be in residence at a degree-granting university in September 2002. A letter from the Director of Civil Works announcing the program and providing details on costs and application procedures is expected to be sent to MSC commanders in April.

Mark.C.Dunning@wrc01.usace.army.mil 

FY02 Prospect Courses

John Buckley -- HNC

A number of PROSPECT courses are still available for FY02. Information about these courses can be found online at: <http://pdsc.usace.army.mil>. If interested in enrolling in any of these courses, please discuss this with your supervisor and local training coordinator and have a DD Form 1556 completed and forwarded to the Registrar's Office of the USACE Professional Development Support Center (PDSC). Telephone: 256-895-7421/7425. Fax: 256-895-7569. Some courses are currently full; some still have spaces available. If a course is full, you may request to be put on a waiting list and you will be informed when a space becomes available. On the PDSC website, you will also find information on the distance learning program. This program includes web and CD-Rom based training courses that are available anytime and anywhere with virtually no travel expenses. POC for this message is John Buckley. John.P.Buckley@hnd01.usace.army.mil Telephone: 256-895-7431 

The Ecosystem Functions Model: A Tool for Restoration Planning

John Hickey -- HEC

The Ecosystem Functions Model (EFM) is a planning tool that analyzes ecosystem response to changes in flow regime. The Hydrologic Engineering Center (CEIWR-HEC), in conjunction with the Sacramento and San Joaquin River Basins Comprehensive Study, is developing the EFM and envisions environmental planners, biologists, and engineers using the model to help determine whether proposed alternatives (i.e., reservoir operations or levee alignments) would maintain, enhance, or diminish ecosystem health.

Central to EFM analyses are "functional relationships." These relationships link characteristics of hydrologic and hydraulic time series (flow and stage) to elements of the ecosystem through combinations of four basic criteria – season, flow frequency, duration, and rate of stage recession. There

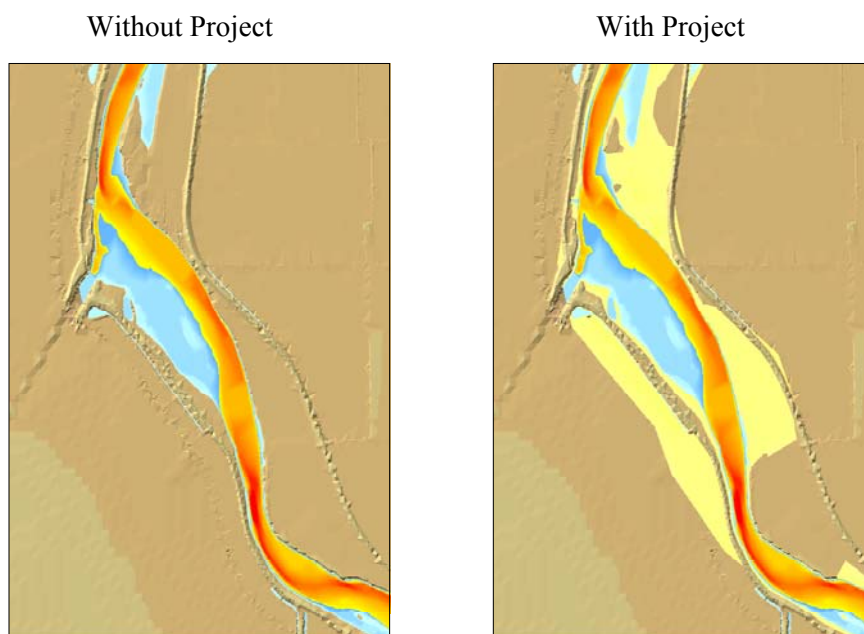
is no limit to the number or genre of relationships that may be developed and a user interface has been constructed to facilitate entry and inventory of criteria. The pilot application of the EFM used fifteen relationships to investigate a range of ecosystem elements, including fish spawning, fish rearing, fish stranding, recruitment of large woody debris, channel migration, riparian forest regeneration, and many others.

After relationships are developed, a statistic computations package (also managed by the interface) analyzes flow and stage time series for the specified criteria and produces a single flow value for each relationship. This process is repeated to assess a modified flow regime and resulting values for without and with project conditions are compared to indicate the direction of change of ecosystem health.


A strength of the EFM is its ability to assess results spatially. In addition to the statistical computations, EFM analyses typically involve hydraulic modeling, which translates statistical results to water surface profiles and spatial coverages of water depth, velocity, and inundated area, and GIS programs to display these generated coverages as well as other relevant spatial data (i.e., soils, vegetation, and land-use maps).

Hydraulic modeling and GIS improve EFM applications by helping project teams to visualize existing ecologic conditions and highlight promising restoration sites (see Figure), by computing depth and velocity data that can be used as criteria to further define relationships, and by making it possible to assess multiple alternatives incrementally - through GIS, inundated areas for individual relationships can be compared and ranked as a measure of the relative enhancement (or decline) of that ecosystem element for any number of alternatives.

Figure: Visual comparison of floodplain habitat for fish spawning under without and with project conditions in the San Joaquin River, California. This alternative focused on the use of reservoir releases to mimic a more natural flow regime.




Spatial functions of the EFM are being programmed as extensions for ArcGIS software. The goal of this effort is to package a few commonly used functions in an easy to use interface for model users who are not GIS specialists.

The EFM is applicable to a wide range of ecotypes and Corps projects. A beta version of the software is due to be available by April 2002. For more information regarding the EFM, please contact John Hickey, HEC. John.T.Hickey@hec01.usace.army.mil 

National Association of Flood Plain Managers Makes Bold Proposal


Brad Fowler -- CECW-PG

The Association of State Flood Plain Managers (ASFPM) proposes major changes to national flood policy and to the way communities conduct flood plain management. The initiative is called No Adverse Impact (NAI). In a nutshell, ASFPM proposes first that exclusive concern should be with the possible "adverse impacts" of some property owner actions. Second, "adverse impacts" are any increases in flood peaks, flood stage, flood velocity, and erosion and sedimentation. Third, for purposes of flood plain management, property rights are redefined to include the right to be free from these "adverse impacts". Note that adverse impacts are defined exclusively in hydrologic and hydraulics terms, independently of any harm done.

It's a bold proposal, to say the least. You can read the NAI White Paper and related material at <http://www.floods.org/> 

Instructions for Contributors to Planning Ahead

This newsletter is designed to improve the communication among all the planners and those we work with throughout the Corps. We hope that future editions will have mostly information and perspective from those of you on the front lines in the districts. We hope that these notes become a forum for you to share your experiences to help all of us learn from each other. We can't afford to reinvent the wheel in each office. We welcome your thoughts, questions, success stories, and bitter lessons so that we can share them on these pages. The articles should be short (2-3 paragraphs) except in some cases where you just have to say more.

- Use MS WORD, if at all possible
- Use "normal" style
- Use Times New Roman font, 11 point
- All text should be left justified with start of each paragraph indented by one tab stop.
- Each article should have short title with only initial letter of each word capitalized
- Following each title should be author's name and organization
- Last line should be contact information – phone number or e-mail address 

Subscribing to Planning Ahead

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That single line of text should be: "subscribe ls-planningahead"

To obtain a 'help' file, send only the word 'help' in the text of the message (nothing in the subject line) and address it to majordomo@usace.army.mil.

The web site for additional information is: <http://eml01.usace.army.mil/other/listserv.html> 

Submissions Deadline

The deadline for material for the next issue is 17 May 2002.

Planning Ahead is an unofficial publication authorized under AR 25-30. It is published by the Planning Division, Directorate of Civil Works, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 20 Massachusetts Ave., NW, Washington, D.C. 20314-1000, (<http://www.usace.army.mil/inet/functions/cw/cecwpnews.htm>)

We are pleased that we have doubled the staff of *Planning Ahead* with Brad Fowler coming on board as editor, writer and chief bottle washer. Harry Kitch will continue to serve as publisher. Please continue to send in all those good articles and information to Brad. TEL 202-761-4231, FAX 202-761-1972, or email kirby.b.fowler@usace.army.mil. Harry Kitch can be reached at TEL 202-761-1969 or FAX 202-761-1972 or e-mail Harry.E.Kitch@usace.army.mil. 